

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (currently amended) A device for using various types of coupling system $[(R_i)]$ (\underline{R}_1) to connect a tube (2) to a filter housing (3) including a series of tubular filter elements, each coupling system $[(R_i)]$ (\underline{R}_1) of a given type comprising:

- a flange $[(B_i)]$ (\underline{B}_1) of said type fitted to the tube (2);
- a backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (\underline{P}_1) of said type for connection to the filter housing;
- a sealing member $[(E_i)]$ (\underline{E}_1) interposed between said flange $[(B_i)]$ (\underline{B}_1)

and said backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (\underline{P}_1); and

- tightening means $[(S_i)]$ (\underline{S}_1) of said type acting between said flange and said backing-plate in order to provide sealing between them, the device being characterized in that it comprises:

- a head plate (21) independent of the type of coupling system $[(R_i)]$ (\underline{R}_1) fixed to the housing (3) and provided with passages (22) for receiving the ends of the tubular filter elements, these passages (22) opening out in a bearing face (23) of the head plate;

- for each backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (\underline{P}_1) of a given type, a first bearing face (25) complementary to the bearing face (23) of the head plate (21), and a second bearing face (29) adapted to co-operate with the flange $[(B_i)]$ (\underline{B}_1) of corresponding type;

- a sealing gasket (28) interposed between the first bearing face (25) of a backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (\underline{P}_1) of a given type and the head plate (21); and

- releasable connection means (30) between the head plate (21) and each backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (\underline{P}_1) of a given type to provide sealing between them and to

enable each backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (P_1) of a given type to be mounted on and removed from the head plate (21).

2. (currently amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in a backing-plate $[(P_i)]$ (P_1) of a given type forms part of a clamp type coupling system $[(R_i)]$ (R_1).

3. (original) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that a backing-plate (P_2) of a given type forms part of a gripper type coupling system (R_2).

4. (original) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that a backing-plate (P_3) of a given type forms part of a flange type coupling system (R_4).

5. (currently amended) A device according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ **claim 1**, characterized in that each backing-plate (P_1) of a given type has a series of holes each arranged to coincide with the passages (22) receiving the ends of the tubular filter elements.

6. (original) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that the releasable connection means (30) are constituted by screws, clamps, grippers, or the like co-operating with the head plate (21) and each backing-plate (P_1) of a given type.

7. (original) A device according to claim 2, characterized in that the backing-plate (P_1) of the clamp type co-operates with a flange (B_1) of the clamp type via

tightening means (S₁) constituted by an asymmetrical clamping collar enabling a tube (2) of one diameter to be connected to a filter housing (3) of a different diameter.

8. (currently amended) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ **claim 1**.

9. (new) A device according to claim 2, characterized in that each backing-plate (P₁) of a given type has a series of holes each arranged to coincide with the passages (22) receiving the ends of the tubular filter elements.

10. (new) A device according to claim 3, characterized in that each backing-plate (P₁) of a given type has a series of holes each arranged to coincide with the passages (22) receiving the ends of the tubular filter elements.

11. (new) A device according to claim 4, characterized in that each backing-plate (P₁) of a given type has a series of holes each arranged to coincide with the passages (22) receiving the ends of the tubular filter elements.

12. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 2.

13. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 3.

14. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 4.

15. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 5.

16. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 6.

17. (new) A filter installation including a tube (2) connected to a filter housing (3) by means of a connection device (1) according to claim 7.